



Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

Tony Evers, Governor | Mary M. Kolar, Secretary

July 17, 2020

Greetings! I am pleased to seek your input on a prospective safe visit plan as we continue to monitor and respond to the evolving COVID-19 situation. We understand that interacting with loved ones plays an important role in the overall health of an individual and we are committed to finding safe ways for us all to be together again.

As you are aware, staff and members at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove have been participating in regular universal testing for coronavirus. We are very proud of the fact that no member has tested positive for COVID-19 and we have had very limited past staff positive tests. We have only been able to do this because of the health, safety, and infectious disease control protocols we have in place.

As we've learned more about the virus and gathered information from experts in the long-term care industry, we are now prepared to develop a plan for safe visits. We've taken tenets of other plans that have been adopted by long-term care facilities that we believe can work for us, too. The outline of a tentative plan is below.

1. All visits will be scheduled through a central phone number.
2. All visitors will be required to sign-in and be screened for COVID-19 to include a temperature check and screening questionnaire. If the visitor doesn't pass the screening, they will not be allowed to visit that day and will not be able to visit until they are symptom free as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control.
3. Both visitors and members? will be required to wear a mask for the duration of the visit.
4. Visitors will be required to use hand sanitizer upon entering and exiting the visiting area.
5. The parlor adjacent to Boland Hall's entrance will be the designated visiting area. All visits will be conducted in the designated area only, not member rooms, to lessen member and staff contact with visitors.
6. Staff will sanitize the designated visitation area after each visit.
7. Staff will/must monitor for social distancing, sanitized hand-holding and a masked hug at the beginning and end of the visit may be allowed.
8. Union Grove will have the capacity to accommodate three 30-minute visits per day to ensure we can have adequate staff to support visits and provide required sanitation.
9. Initially, visits will be during business hours during the week. Weekends may be added once the process has proven successful.

We'd appreciate your comments and suggestions on the above so we can put in a place a visitation plan. You can send comments to SafeVisits@dva.wisconsin.gov. Please submit comments by July 26, 2020.

Please understand that these visits must be done in a way that does not risk the health of our members and staff. And, everyone must understand that visits will be completely dependent on COVID-19's status and may be suspended at any time.

We look forward to hearing from you and finding a responsible way with the fewest risks to bring you and your loved ones back together again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diane Lynch".

Diane Lynch
Homes Division Administrator